workers such as health care, housing, educational assistance for children, drinking water supply, etc. The Government is also implementing various employment oriented schemes and programmes such as Swaranjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana, National Social Assistance Programme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana, Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana, etc. to provide gainful employment to the labourers. Further, the Government has recently launched a social security scheme for agricultural labour namely "Krishi Shramik Samajik Suraksha Yojana, 2001' through the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) in 50 selected districts to cover 10 lakh agricultural workers over a period of three years.

(c) and (d) The Second National Commission on Labour (NCL) has made wide ranging recommendations on various issues relating to Welfare and Social Security to the workers in the unorganized sector. Extensive consultations and interactions on NCL's recommendations have already been initiated with various interest groups.

Changes in labour laws

1727. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "PHD calls for level playing field in labour laws" which appeared in The Hindu, dated the 22nd October, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government would ensure that changes in the existing labour laws should be allowed in consonance with the need of social security measures for labour togetherwith the security of tenure of the employees; and

(d) if so, the measures contemplated in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) As per the news-item, the PHD has suggested an urgent need to restructure labour laws keeping in view the emergence of globalisation of the Indian Economy.

(c) and (d) The Second National Commission on Labour set up by the Government to suggest rationalization of existing laws relating to labour in the organised sector and an umbrella legislation for ensuring the minimum

level of protection to the workers in the unorganised sector has since submitted its report to the Government. The recommendations of the Commission cover various aspects of labour *viz.* review of laws, social security, women and child labour, skill development, labour administration, unorganised sector etc. The report is under process in consultation with various social partners. However, given the procedures involved, it may be difficult to specify the time limit.

Utilization of EPF for housing scheme

1728. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Employees Provident Fund accumulation would be utilized for housing scheme for EPF members;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other social security benefits proposed for the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Central Board of Trustees, Employees Provident Fund (EPF) at its 158th meeting held on 22.10.2002 has, in principle, approved launching of a housing scheme for EPF subscribers. A Committee has been constituted consisting of representatives of employers, employees and senior officials of Employees Provident Fund Organisation under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Gopalan, former Union Labour Secretary. The Committee is studying the feasibility aspects of the implementation of the scheme.

Implementation of Labour Commission's recommendations

1729. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question No. 305 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 21st November, 2002 and state:

(a) the recommendations on the issues which are not acceptable to the Unions; and

(b) the manner in which Government plan to resolve them and push through the long-standing reforms, which is vital for the growth and development of the Nation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Trade Unions have generally opposed